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R.K.O.'S WESTERN STAR

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NO.32



# TIM HOLT

"TERROR IN THE IRON MASK!"



# WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM





THE CHILDREN OF ADA, OKLAHOMA RECENTLY PRESENTED TIM HOLT WITH A SHETLAND PONY, TO TRAIN AND TAKE WITH HIM ON HIS TOUR.

# A PONY FOR TIM



NOW AS TIM VISITS CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS ALL OVER THE NATION, THE PONY, NAMED "WHISPER OF ADA" WILL TROT ALONG WITH HIM.

TIM HOLT

# TIM HOLT



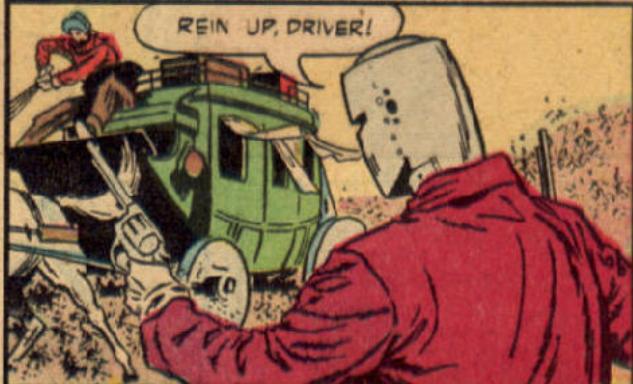
DRAWN BY  
FRANK BOLLE

EUROPE HAD ITS "MAN-IN-THE-IRON MASK" WHOSE FACE WAS NEVER SEEN. AND THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST WAS TO KNOW ITS OWN MAN IN A METAL MASK, TOO — WITH THE COMING OF THIS MYSTERIOUS OUTLAW WHO ROBBED AND KILLED WITH ARROGANT BOLDNESS...

WHEN **TIM HOLT**, AS DEPUTY SHERIFF OF THE TOWN OF BULLET, STEPPED IN TO TRACK HIM DOWN, TIM RAN HIS OWN NECK INTO A HANGMAN'S NOOSE! THEN — WHAT COULD **REDMASK** DO TO SAVE HIMSELF FROM THE HANDS OF —

## "THE IRON MASK!"

**IRON MASK** MADE HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE BEND OF THE DRAGOON RIVER —



HIS NEXT APPEARANCE WAS AT THE BULLET BANK...

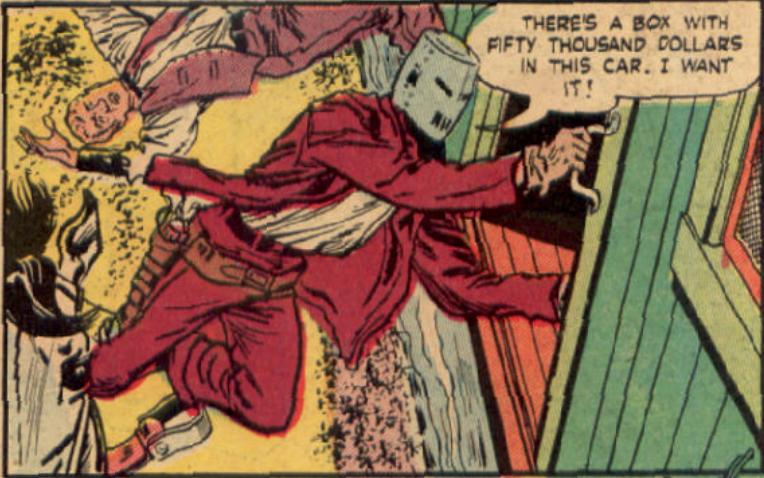


# TIM HOLT

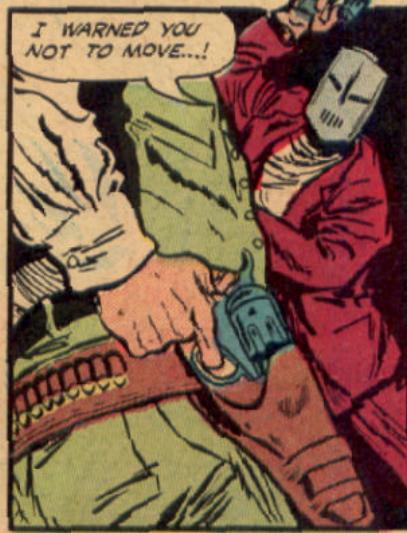
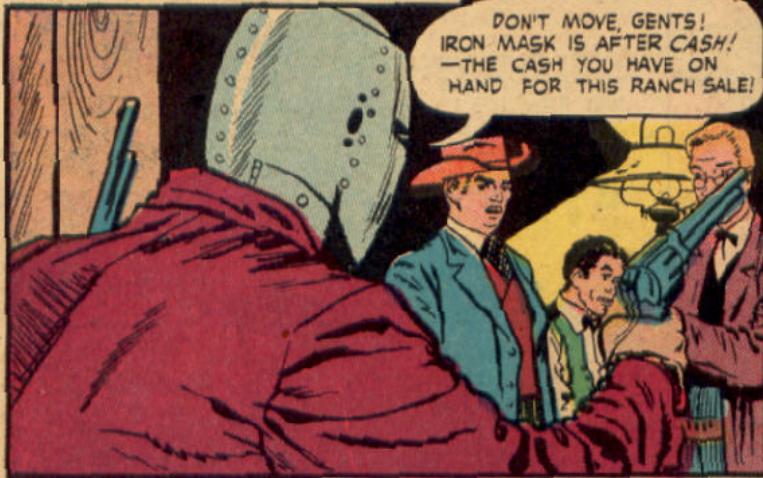
HE GALLOPED DOWN ON THE UNION PACIFIC TRAIN AS IT CHUGGED UP HORSESHOE HILL...



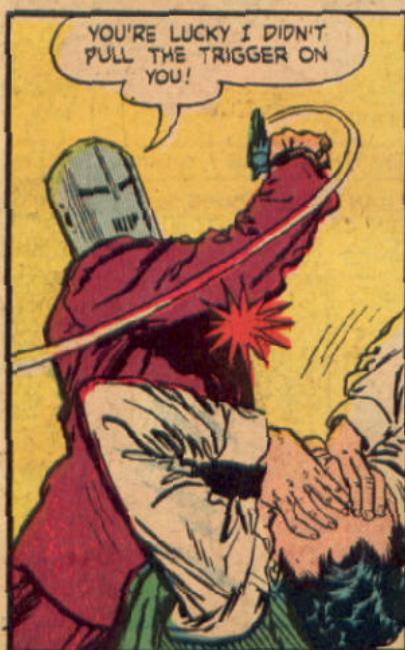
WITH A DARING LEAP, HE WENT OFF HIS HORSE AND INTO THE BAGGAGE CAR—



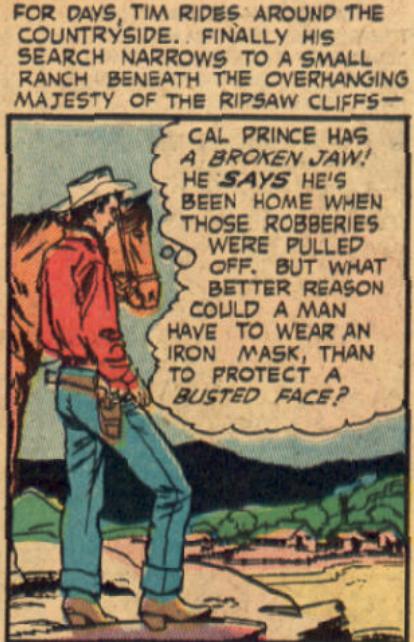
FOR TWO DAYS, IRON MASK REMAINED HIDDEN. ON THE EVENING OF THE THIRD DAY AFTER HIS TRAIN ROBBERY—



YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T PULL THE TRIGGER ON YOU!



# TIM HOLT



FOR FIVE DAYS, TIM CAMPS OUT, WITH CAL PRINCE'S LITTLE SPREAD ALWAYS UNDER HIS EYES—



ON THE MORNING OF THE SIXTH DAY OF THE LONELY VIGIL—

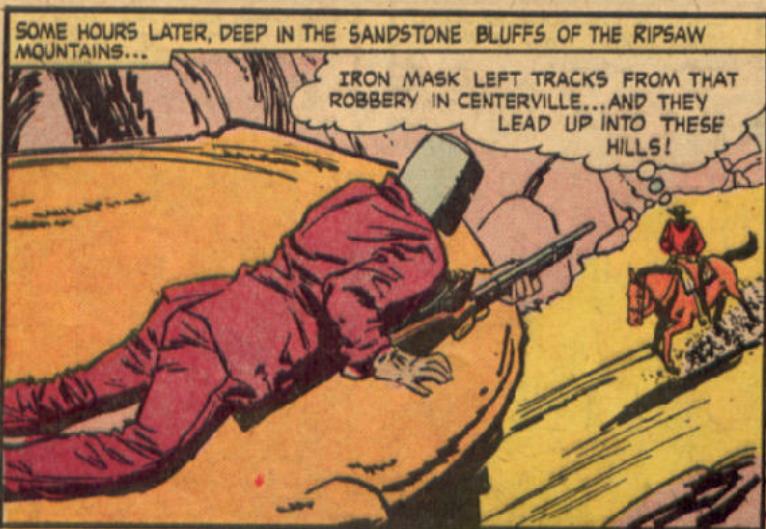


# TIM HOLT

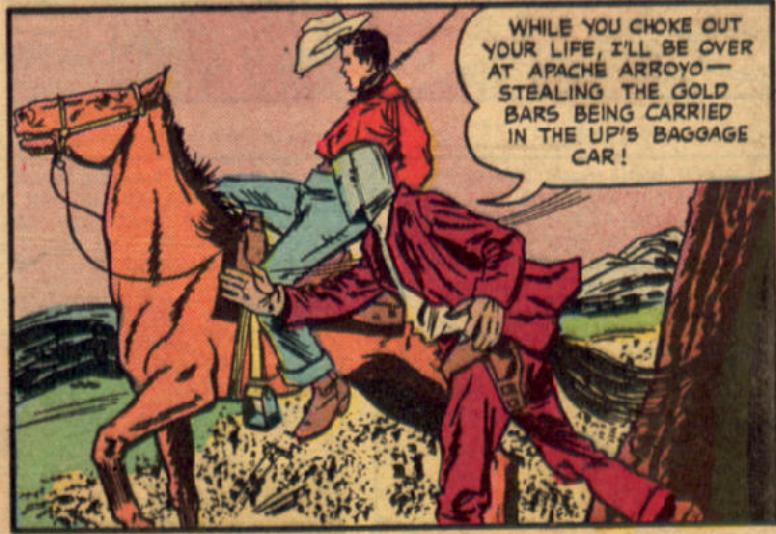
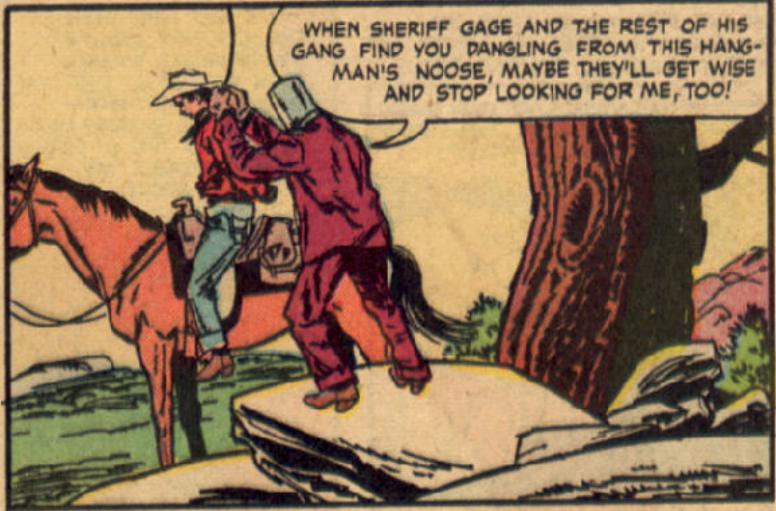
FOR SEVERAL DAYS, TIM HOLT TRIES TO FORGET THE PUZZLING CASE OF THE IRON MASK IN CHORES AT THE T-BAR-H RANCH—



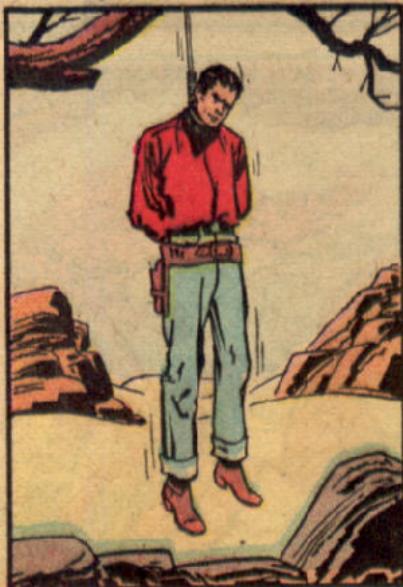
HIS ATTENTION DISTRACTED BY THE SHERIFF, TIM IS FLUNG SIDWAYS BY THE SUNFISHING BRONC!



# TIM HOLT



A MOMENT LATER, TIM PANGLES AT THE END OF A ROPE —



HOURS AFTERWARD, AT APACHE ARROYO —



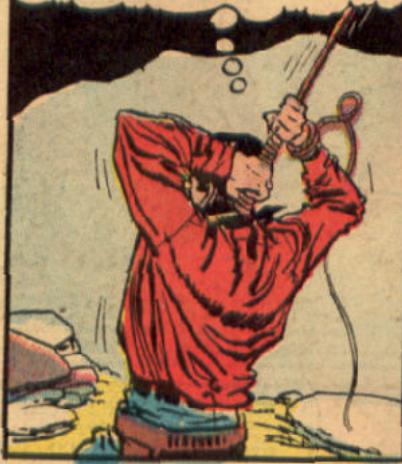
MAKING HIS WAY BETWEEN THE SWAYING CARS, HE DROPS DOWN INTO THE BAGGAGE CAR —



# TIM HOLT

MEANWHILE—SHORT MOMENTS AFTER HE HAS BEEN YANKED FROM HIS SADDLE—TIM FREES HIS WRISTS AND LIFTS A HAND TO THE ROPE ABOVE HIM!

LUCKY FOR ME IRON MASK DIDN'T LOOK UNDER THE NECKER-CHIEF AROUND MY THROAT!



SOMEWHOW LATER—

SINCE IRON MASK WANTS TIM HOLT DEAD, DEAD HE WILL BE! BUT REDMASK ISN'T DEAD— AND AIMS TO KEEP A DATE WITH IRON MASK AT APACHE ARROYO!



—OR HE'D HAVE SEEN THE LEATHER COLLAR I'M WEARING! WHEN I TOOK THAT SPILL OFF THAT BRONC IN THE T-BAR-H CORRAL, THE SHERIFF AND CHITO FIXED THIS UP FOR ME—TO PROTECT MY SPRAINED NECK!



LUCKILY, THIS COLLAR TOOK THE SHOCK OF BEING YANKED OFF THE HORSE WHEN IRON MASK TRIED TO HANG ME—AND PREVENTED THE ROPE FROM CHOKING ME!

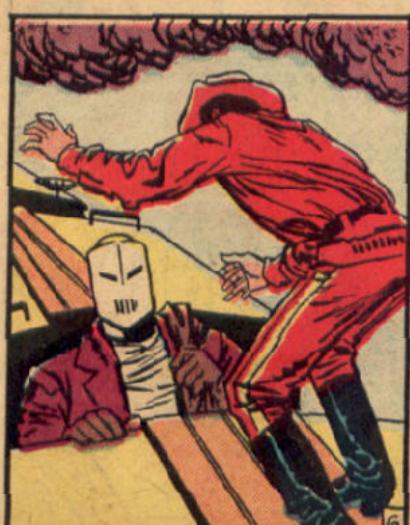


HIGH ABOVE THE SWAYING TRAIN BELOW, REDMASK CROUCHES—

THE LAST THING I HEARD AS THE ROPE PULLED ME OFF MY BRONC WAS THAT IRON MASK WAS GOING AFTER THE GOLD BARS BEING CARRIED ON THAT TRAIN!

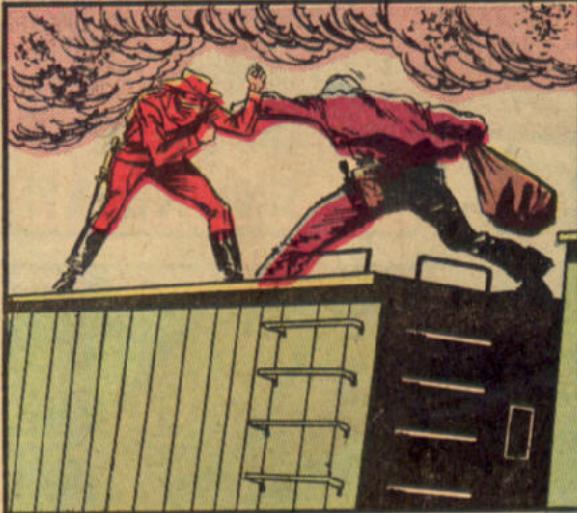


BUT BEFORE HE GETS THAT GOLD, HE'S GOING TO TANGLE WITH ME....



# TIM HOLT

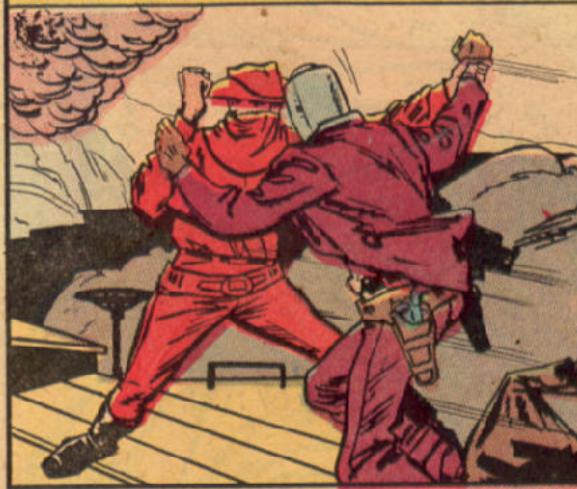
LIKE A MADDENED WILDCAT, REDMASK LEAPS!



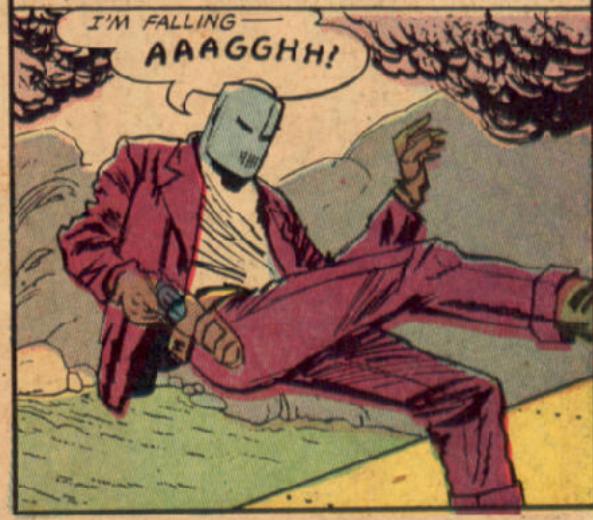
HIS FIST SINKS DEEP INTO IRON MASK'S STOMACH!



REELING AND SWAYING BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE SWINGING CARS, THEY FIGHT SAVAGELY—WITH DEATH AWAITING ONE OR THE OTHER!



AS IRON MASK STEPS BACK FOR ROOM TO PULL HIS GUN, HIS FOOT SLIPS OUT FROM UNDER HIM—



FROM THE RAILROAD BRIDGE OVER WHICH THE TRAIN IS PASSING TO THE WATERS OF THE SWEET-WATER RIVER IS A DROP OF ONE HUNDRED FEET. IRON MASK HITS THE WATER HARD—

LATER— HE WAS ED LACERTON—THE TOWN GUNSMITH! HIS FACE WAS SO POCKED WITH GUNPOWDER BURNS HE KNEW ANYONE THAT SAW EVEN A SMALL PART OF HIS FACE WOULD KNOW HIM. HE HAD TO USE A SPECIAL MASK. AN IRON MASK!



FUNNY! THE VERY THING THAT PROTECTED HIM—BETRAYED AND DROWNED HIM AT THE END!



# TIM HOLT

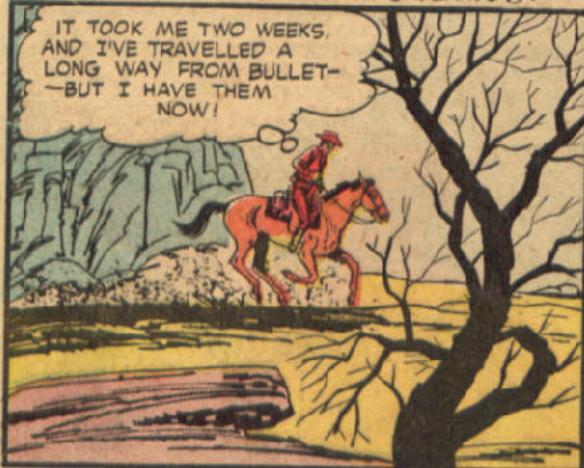
REDMASK IS HOT ON THE  
TRAIL OF AN OUTLAW BAND  
OF KILLERS WHEN HE IS  
SHOT DOWN AND ARRESTED  
BY—

**"The Sheriff of  
Silver Creek!"**

YOU'RE UNDER  
ARREST FOR MURDER AND  
ROBBERY, REDMASK!  
THEY'LL HANG YOU! I'M  
GOING TO TAKE A  
LOOK AT THE  
FACE BEHIND  
THAT MASK!



FOR DAYS REDMASK HAS FOLLOWED THE NOTORIOUS  
CANYON CITY BANDITS THROUGH THE WIND-ERODED  
ROCK PILES OF THE SAWTOOTH BADLANDS...



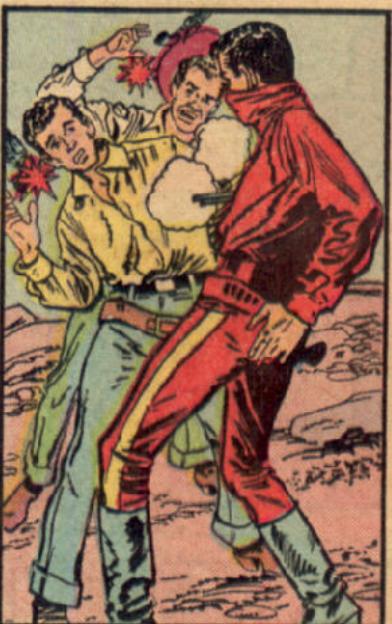
HOPE YOU'VE FINISHED THAT  
MEAL, HOMBRES—BECAUSE  
IT'S THE LAST ONE YOU'LL  
EAT AS FREE MEN!

REDMASK!



# TIM HOLT

LIKE A MADDENED PANTHER, THE CRIMSON CAVALIER THROWS HIMSELF AGAINST THE OUTLAW BAND!



# TIM HOLT

A MOMENT LATER—

WH—WHAT  
HAPPENED?

I SHOT YOU, HOMBRE!  
I'M ARRESTING YOU  
AS THE LEADER OF THE  
CANYON CITY OWLHOOCH  
BUNCH!

A WOMAN! A GIRL SHERIFF! ...

THAT'S  
THE  
BIGGEST  
WHOPPER I'VE EVER  
HEARD!

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT  
OUR TRAILS CROSSED!  
I'M AFTER THOSE  
BANDITS MYSELF!



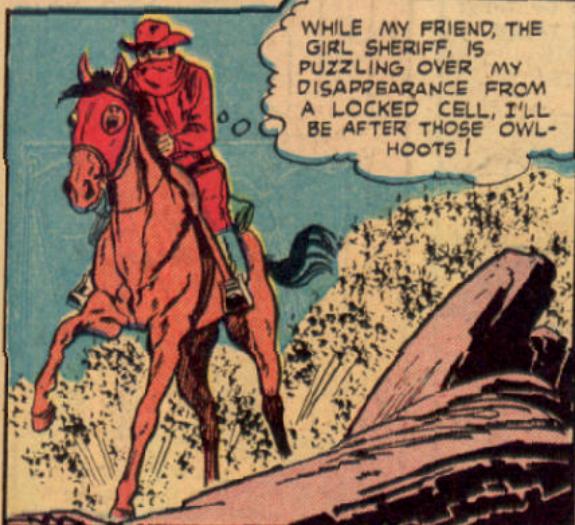
SOME HOURS LATER, A CELL DOOR CLICKS SHUT  
ON REDMASK—



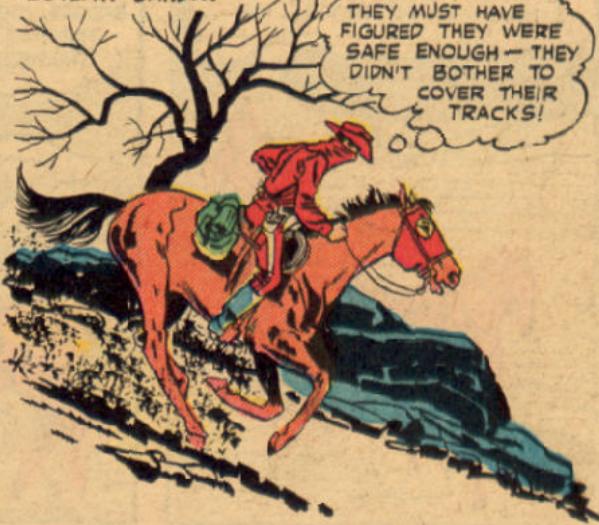
EVER SINCE PAUL CALVERT—THE FRENCH DETECTIVE FROM THE SURETE—DIED AND LEFT ME HIS NEW-FANGLED CRIME LABORATORY, I'VE CARRIED SOME OF THESE TRICKS IN THIS SPECIALLY PREPARED BELT. THIS SMALL, POWERFUL MAGNET OUGHT TO COME IN HANDY...!



RELOCKING THE DOORS BEHIND HIM, REDMASK RACES OFF INTO THE NIGHT—



MOVING STEADILY ACROSS THE MOON-DRENCHED SAGE FLATS, REDMASK FOLLOWS THE TRAIL OF THE OUTLAW BAND...



ABOVE HIM, A SENTRY STEADIES HIS RIFLE...



BUT REDMASK OWNS THE FASTEST GUN-HANDS NORTH OR SOUTH OF THE BORDER! HIS COLT LIFTS — FLAMES!



# TIM HOLT

BEYOND THE LEDGE WHERE THE SENTRY STOOD, LIE THE DREAD  
QUICKSAND BOGS OF LOST FLATS...



IF I TOOK FIFTEEN STEPS IN THAT THING I'D SINK TO MY NECK! ...BUT THE OUTLAWS WOULDN'T LEAVE A SENTRY HERE UNLESS THAT'S WHERE THEY WERE HOLED OUT! GUESS I'M STOPPED-- NO! MAYBE THERE IS A CHANCE...



LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER, IN THE OUTLAW'S ROCK HIDEOUT, THAT SITS LIKE A STONE IN A SEA OF SAND...



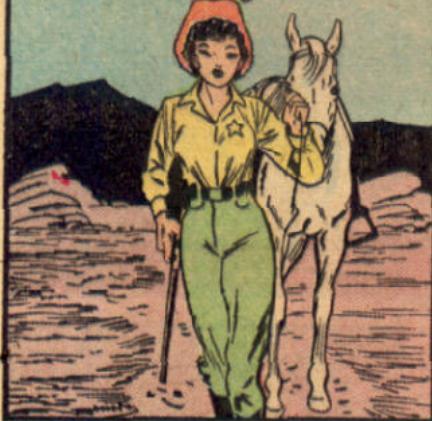
ON SILENT FEET, REDMASK MOVES TOWARD THE HIDEOUT CABIN —



# TIM HOLT

MEANWHILE—

THAT WAS CLEVER OF REDMASK TO GET OUT OF THE JAIL. BUT I'M TOO SMART FOR HIM. HE'S GONE TO REJOIN HIS GANG—AND THIS TIME I'LL BRING THEM ALL IN!



THERE HE IS NOW—LEADING HIS MEN OUT OF THE CABIN ON ANOTHER ROBBERY JOB!



ONCE AGAIN THE GIRL SHERIFF OF SILVER CREEK PULLS TRIGGER AND ONCE AGAIN REDMASK DROPS!



COME ON! SNAP OUT OF IT! I ONLY SHOT TO KNOCK YOU OUT! YOUR GANG GOT AWAY, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO LEAD ME TO THEM—WITH A POSSE AT MY BACK!



OH, NO! NOT YOU AGAIN! NOT AFTER I HAD THEM CAPTURED AND DISARMED!

YOU ALMOST SOUND CONVINCING! BUT YOU'LL BE A LOT MORE CONVINCING BEHIND THOSE JAIL BARS! GET GOING! YOU HAVE A LONG WALK!



OF ALL THE IDIOTIC STUNTS! I'M BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'RE THEIR LEADER! TWICE I HAD THEM! TWICE YOU SHOT ME, AND LET THEM ESCAPE!

THIS PLAY-ACTING DOES NOT FOOL ME! GET MOVING!



OH HAH! MAYBE MY PLAY-ACTING DIDN'T FOOL YOU, BUT IT LET ME GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO YOU FOR THIS!



# TIM HOLT

SORRY ABOUT THIS, MA'AM — BUT YOU'RE MAKING ME DO IT! YOU WON'T LISTEN TO REASON, SO I'LL HAVE TO USE FORCE!

YOU... YOU...



NOW YOU WON'T STOP ME WHEN I GO AFTER THOSE OWLHOCKS! LUCKILY THEY CAN'T GO FAR!

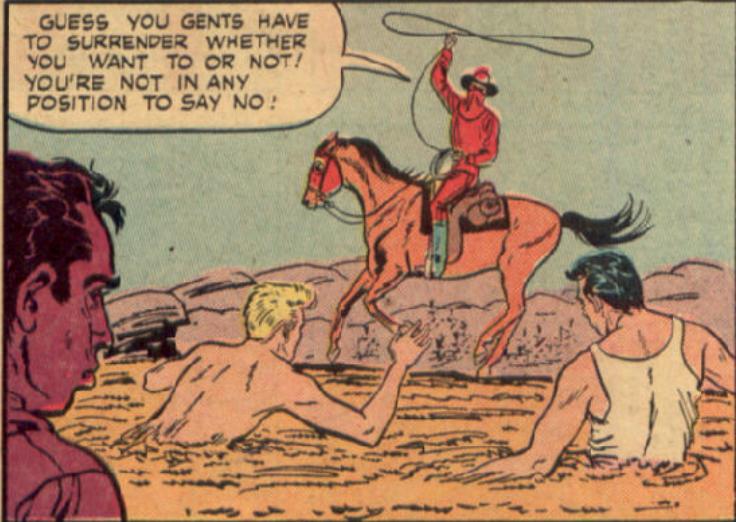
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



WHEN I CAME THROUGH THOSE QUICKSAND BOGS, I CHANGED THE MARKERS THEY'D SET TO GUIDE 'EM THROUGH THEM. WITHOUT HORSES, ON FOOT, THEY'LL BLUNDER INTO THE QUICKSAND, AND I'LL PULL 'EM OUT — AFTER THEY SURRENDER!



GUESS YOU GENTS HAVE TO SURRENDER WHETHER YOU WANT TO OR NOT! YOU'RE NOT IN ANY POSITION TO SAY NO!



SOME HOURS LATER, AFTER THE CANYON CITY BAD BUNCH ARE BEHIND THE CELL BARS OF THE SILVER CREEK JAIL ...

I BELIEVE YOU — NOW! BUT — BUT WHAT MUST YOU THINK OF ME? I GUESS I'M NOT FIT TO BE SHERIFF!

NONSENSE, MA'AM!



ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, MA'AM! BUT NEXT TIME YOU HEAR THAT REDMASK IS AN OUTLAW — TAKE IT WITH A GRAIN OF SALT!



AS REDMASK RIDES AWAY FROM SILVER CREEK, THE TOWN'S SHERIFF CHOKES BACK A SIGH.



# Rocky Rocketman

# OUT OF THIS WORLD

## SPACE STORIES OF THE FUTURE

Now for the first time anywhere, ride through space with Rock Raymond — ROCKETMAN. Watch him as he outsmarts the mad scientist who is in search for eternal beauty in the exciting adventure called "Beauties of Planet Land." See the thrilling rescue of Queen Merca, in the half light of two-light territories by ROCKETMAN. In a complete thrilling chapter follow him you will learn of the fate of the beautiful Queen amid the strange planets, hundreds of years hence. Space ships, strange beings all cast in a fantastic story of the future. "Beauties in Planet Land." This offer is being made through this comic magazine and the ROCKETMAN TELEVIEWER cannot be bought anywhere else excepting by mail. So don't delay, order now.

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HURRY MAIL TODAY

# THE GHOST RIDER

HE CAME IN A STAGECOACH—  
QUIET—LIKE, PEACEABLE. BUT  
UNDER HIS SHINY SKULL LAY  
THE BRAIN OF A SOCRATES,  
AND UNDER HIS CHEST BEAT  
THE HEART OF A LUCIFER...  
**HE WAS THE BRAIN—**  
IMPORTED BY ALL THE  
OWLHOOTS OF THE TERRITORY  
TO GET RID OF THE GHOST  
RIDER...!

DEATH CHUCKLED...  
FOR WHAT GREATER PRIZE  
WAS THERE FOR DEATH  
THAN THE GHOST RIDER  
HIMSELF...? AND DEATH  
BECKONED GRIMLY TO THE  
GHOST RIDER WHEN...

**The BRAIN**  
came  
**WEST**

SILVERTOWN'S  
BANK GETS SOME  
AFTER-HOUR  
VISITORS—

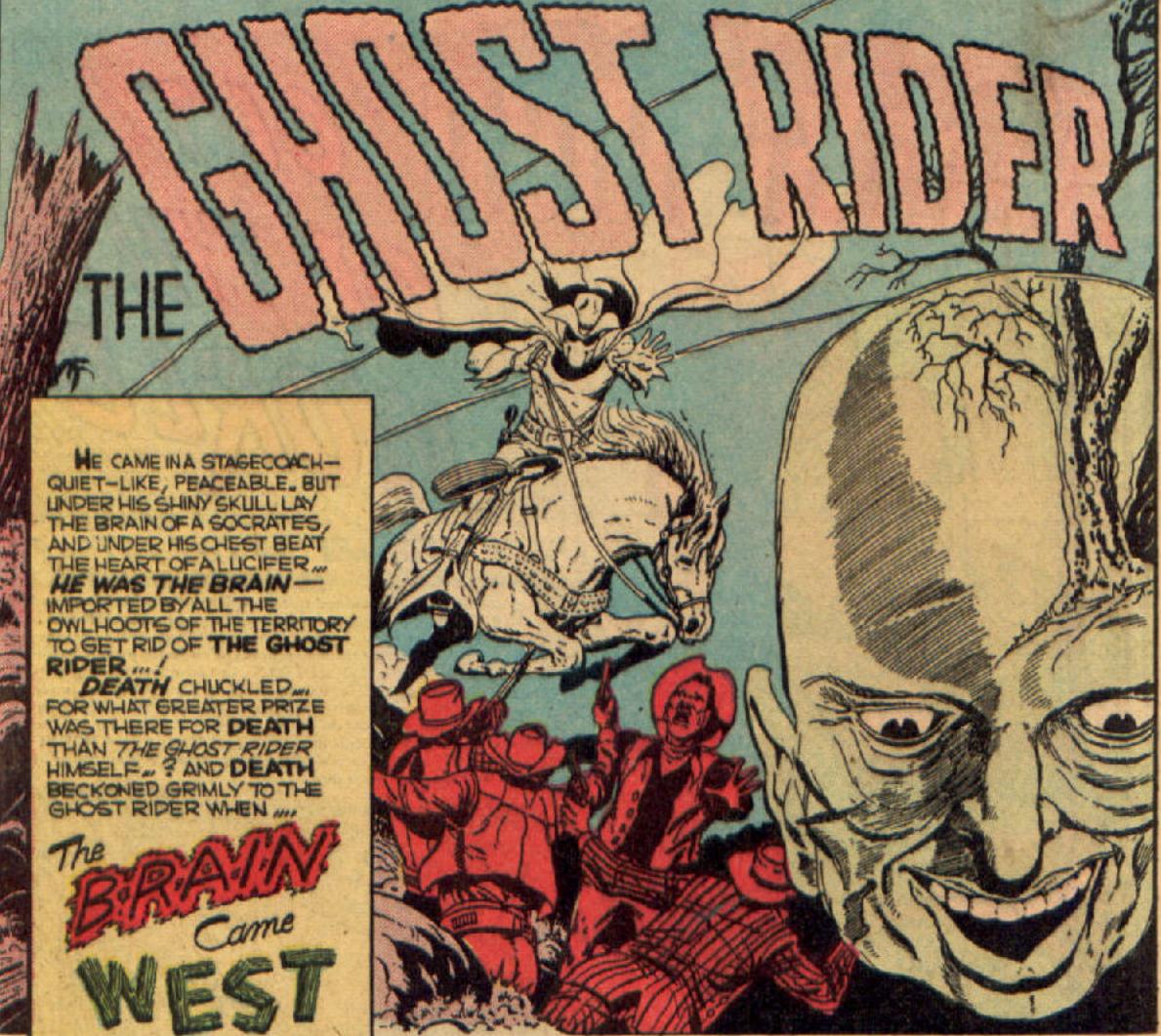
HEY! YUH GOTTA  
MAKE SUCH A  
RUCKUS?

NOTHIN'  
TO WORRY  
ABOUT—  
THE  
TOWNSPOLK  
ARE ALL  
SLEEPIN' OFF  
THET BIG  
WEDDIN'  
SHINDIG...

**BLOODY**

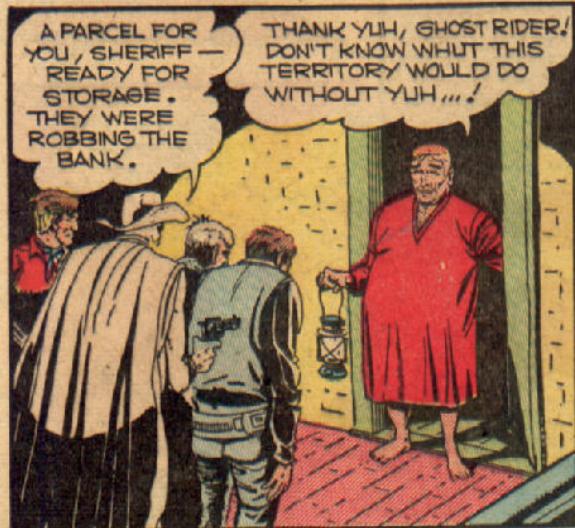
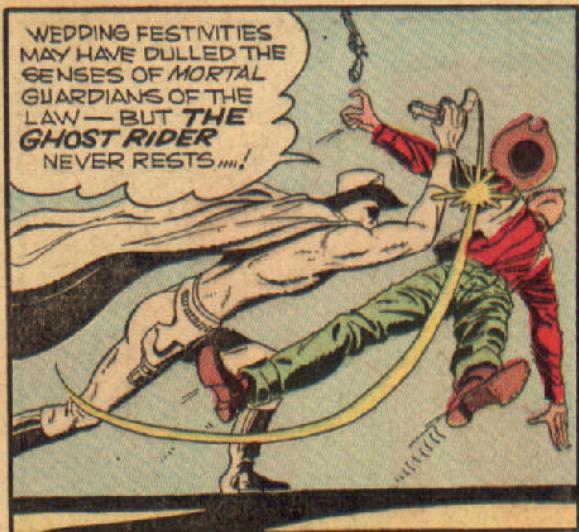
HIT  
LEATHER,  
MEN!  
NOBODY  
HEARD—

I HAVE HEARD YOUR EVIL  
EXPLOSION RIP ASUNDER  
THE STILLNESS OF THE  
NIGHT!

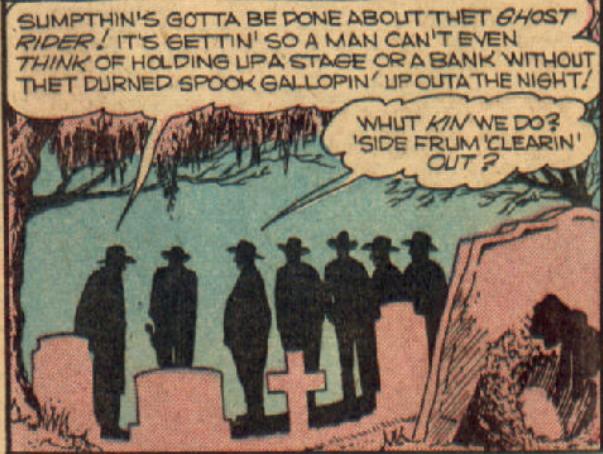




WEDDING FESTIVITIES  
MAY HAVE DULLED THE  
SENSES OF MORTAL  
GUARDIANS OF THE  
LAW — BUT **THE  
GHOST RIDER**  
NEVER RESTS!!!



THE NEXT NIGHT, A GRIM CONCLAVE MEETS  
IN SILVERTOWN'S CEMETERY



YUH'VE ALL HEARD OF  
**THE BRAIN**! HE WORKS  
IN THE EAST MAINLY —  
BUT HE KIN BE CONTACTED.  
GETTIN' RID OF PESKY  
UPHOLDERS OF THUH  
LAW IS HIS SPECIALTY!!  
I SAY — CALL HIM IN!

THE VOTE IS FAST AND  
UNANIMOUS. A HAT IS  
PASSED, AND BILLS,  
LIKE DRY GREEN SNAKES,  
SLITHER SILENTLY DOWN.  
THE PRICE COMES HIGH  
FOR THE MAN WHO IS  
GUARANTEED TOGET  
RID OF **THE GHOST  
RIDER**!!!

AND WHEN HIS PRICE IS MET —

THE BRAIN'S ON THIS  
STAGE ... THAT'S ALL HE  
EVER LETS YUH KNOW —  
WHEN HE'S COMIN' ...  
**WHO HE IS** — WHUT HE  
LOOKS LIKE — THOSE ARE  
THINGS NOBODY KNOWS!!!





THE PASSENGERS ALIGHT.  
IS ONE OF THEM  
THE BRAIN?



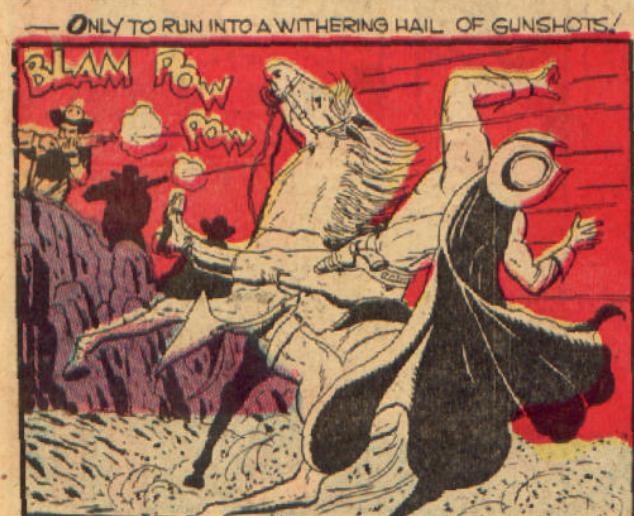
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS LATER,  
AND THE GHOST RIDER ON HIS  
LONELY VIGIL HEARS —



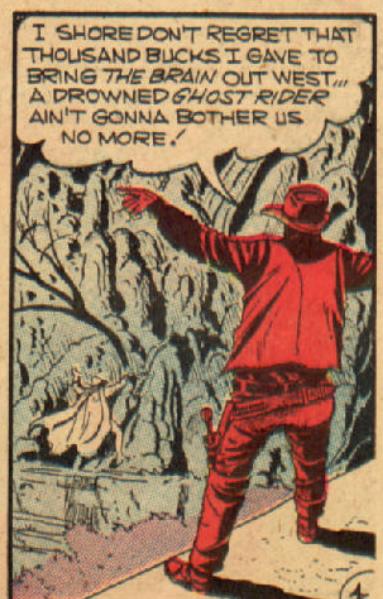
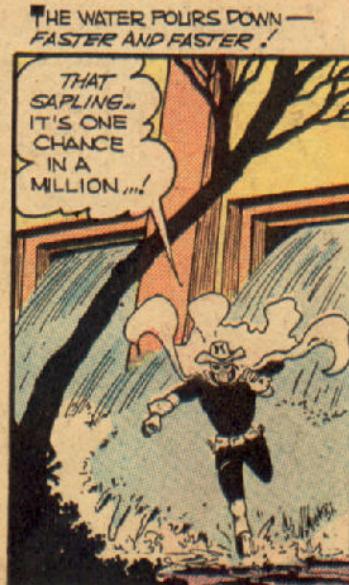
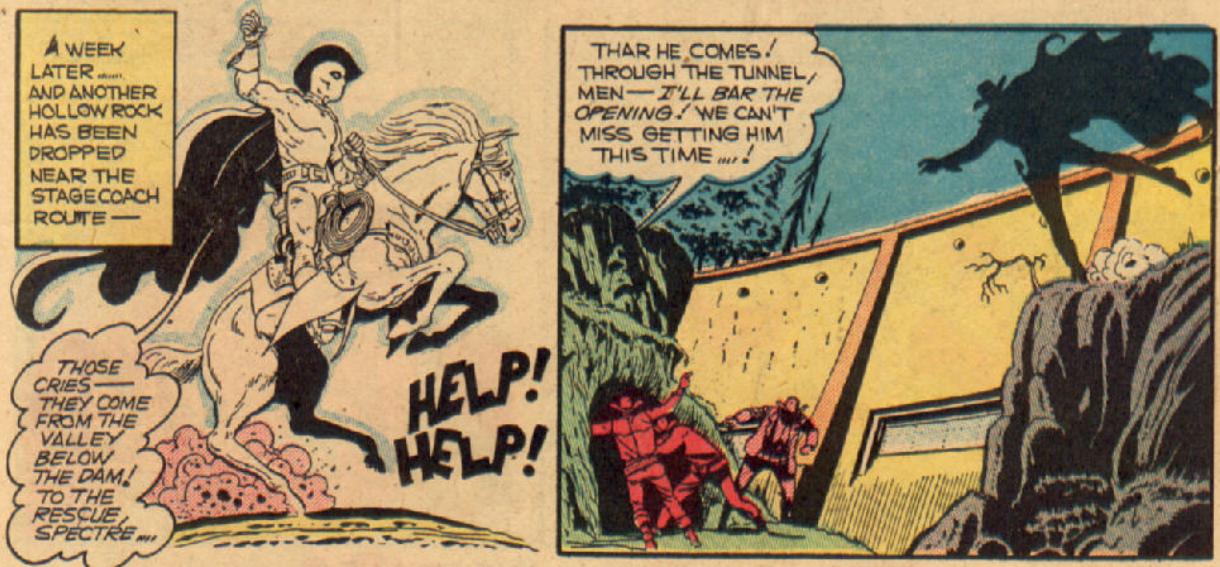
THE BRAIN WORKS  
FAST! THAT NIGHT,  
AN OWLHOOCH PICKS  
UP AN INNOCENT-  
LOOKING ROCK BY  
THE SIDE OF THE  
STAGECOACH ROUTE.  
THE ROCK IS HOLLOW,  
AND INSIDE, NEATLY  
INSCRIBED ON PAPER,  
IS PLAN #1 FOR  
KILLING THE GHOST  
RIDER...!

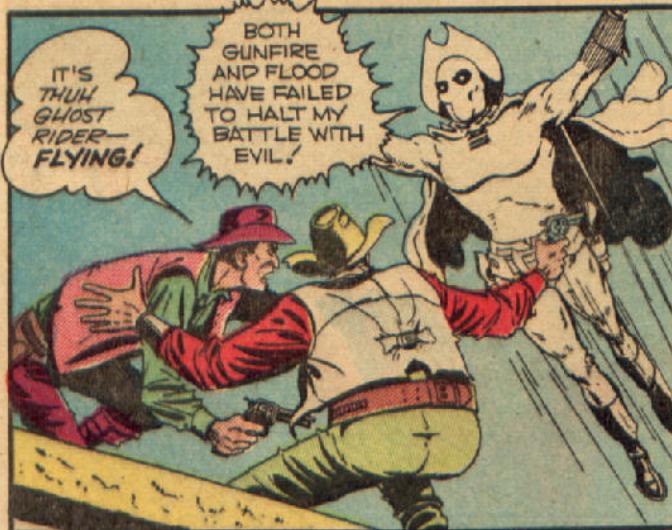
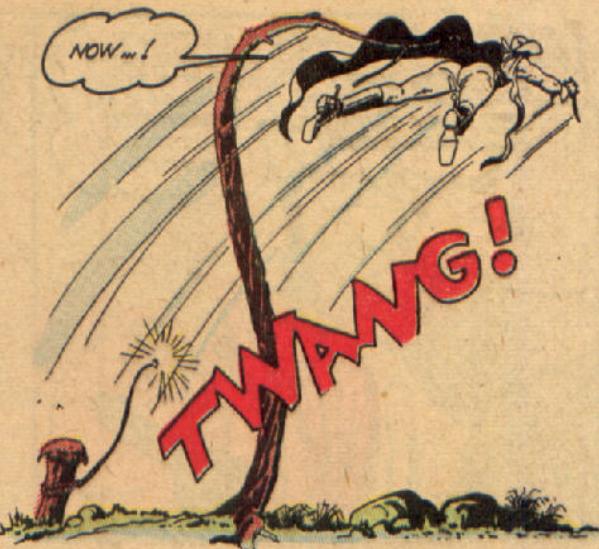
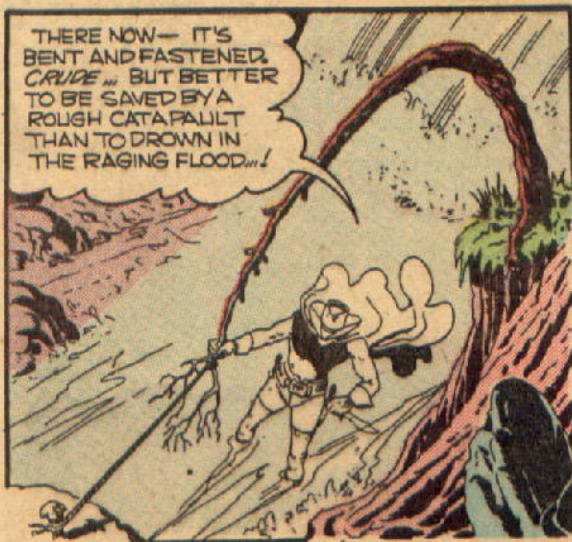


THE VILLAINS FLEE, AND THE GHOST RIDER GIVES  
CHASE. HE FOLLOWS THEM INTO A NARROW RAVINE —



# TIM HOLT





**T**HE NEXT MORNING, THE GHOST RIDER VISITS THE STAGECOACH OFFICE — AS REX FURY, FEDERAL MARSHAL...

I WANT TO SEE THE PASSENGER LIST OF THE COACH THAT CAME INTO TOWN TWO WEDNESDAYS AGO.

WE DON'T KEEP ANY LISTS, FURY— BUT THE DRIVER'S OUT IN BACK. MEBBIE HE CAN TELL YUH—



YOP—I REMEMBER ... THET HINDU FAKIR CAME — SWAMI JOSEPH — HE'S OVER IN THE HOTEL ... THEN THERE WAS A MR. JOSEPH — LOOKED LIKE A GAMBLING GENT, AND THEN THERE WAS THIS BIG GALOOT — LOOKED LIKE AN APE. RED MALONE, I THINK HE CALLED HIMSELF...



**LATER—**

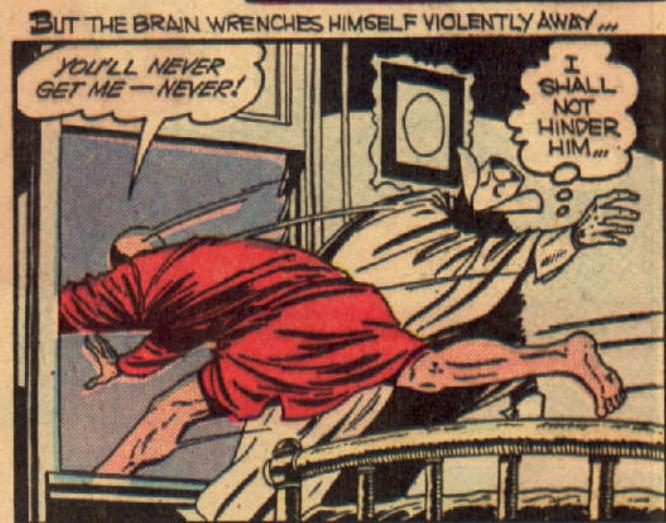
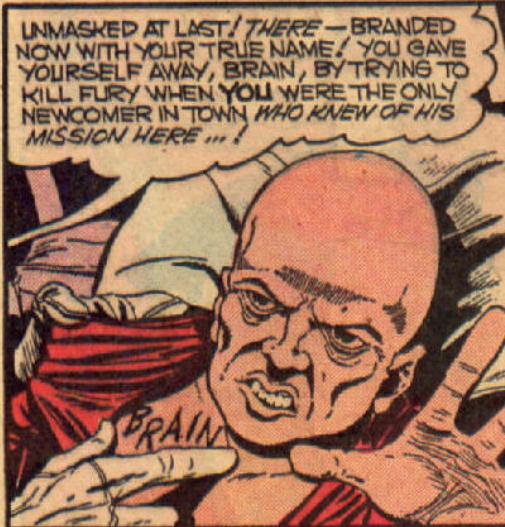
I AM SWAMI JOSEPH. YOU WANT ME TO READ YOUR FUTURE ...?

NO — I WANT TO READ YOUR PAST!



# TIM HOLT

FURY SEATS HIMSELF... JUST THEN A GUST OF WIND THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW BLOWS SOME PAPERS OFF THE TABLE. FURY BENDS DOWN FOR THEM, AND...



# YOU be THE GHOST RIDER



Amaze your friends  
with this weird scarf  
that becomes a real  
*Ghost Rider* mask

ONLY  
**\$1.00**

A white mask with black eye holes and a black border. A banner across the border reads "THE GHOST RIDER".

A jet-black rayon crepe  
scarf...with the name of  
**THE GHOST RIDER** bannered  
on it...and a **SPOOKY**  
white mask that becomes a  
**GHOST RIDER SKULL** when  
the mask is tied on...!

MAIL  
COUPON  
AND  
**\$1.00**  
TO:

TIM HOLT.

## The Plains Indian:

# the Comanche

THE COMANCHES were the Cossacks of the Plains. They were fighters. They looked with scorn on the Indians who farmed, who lived in one spot for more than a few months. Not for the *nimenim*, as they called themselves, were the hoe and the hut! Instead, the grassy Plains was their floor, the blue bowl of sky their roof, the vast herds of buffalo their unending source of food!

The horse and the Comanche went together as naturally as fish and swimming. Mounted on their pinto or piebald ponies, they were the finest horsemanship of the entire world. Not even the Russian Cossacks, or the Uhlan's of Imperial Germany, could match their feats of athletic daring. More than one military expert has called them the "finest natural cavalry" ever assembled.

From the earliest age, the Comanche youths were taught to ride. They could hang over the side of a galloping mount so that an enemy on the opposite side could see nothing—not even the mocassined foot that clung by some magnetic force to the bouncing rump, nor the hand twisted in the pony's long mane!

Before the coming of the horse, the Comanche had ranged the rivers and the wooded mountain areas bordering the plains. A branch of the Shoshonean stock, like the Bannocks, Utes and Shoshoni, they were powerful and muscular, but somewhat ungraceful on their feet. In 1714 the Comanche acquired the horse—and the change was drastic! Instead of being awkward, they became pictures of grace. It was almost as if the Comanche were made to sit a horse's back, so impressive was the difference.

It is not so strange, then, considering the great role the horse played in the Comanche culture, that the Comanches owned the biggest horse herds of all the Plains Indians. Close to Mexico, they swooped across the Rio Grande on horse-stealing raids, bringing back with them fleet Spanish steeds descended from Arabian stock. And when roving bands of Comanche warriors sighted a wild horse herd, out came their maguey lariats, and the chase was on!

While the *nimenim* were no great game-players, as were others of the Plains Indian tribes, they did excel in feats of horsemanship and in horse-racing. Almost childlike in their boastfulness and delight in these arts, the Comanche often gambled heavily on the outcome of races among themselves. Naturally, they lost horses in war and in accidents, but there were always plenty to draw from. It has been estimated that some Comanches owned as many as two hundred!

The Crow Indian is usually credited with being the world's best horse-thief—but the redmen themselves shake their heads and point to the Comanche in awe.

Supplementing their horse was their short ash bow, an ideal weapon for use on the back of a flying pony. In their fringed quivers were one hundred slender arrows: some bone-tipped, some set with thin steel slivers. It is small wonder, then, that the Comanche was so feared in battle. Dashing in, red throats quivering with the war-whoop, short bows twanging, sending thin needles of death through the hot Texas sunlight, dropping to the far side of their galloping ponies so as to present no target to the enemy, the *nimenin* rode with chins high, masters of their grassy plains.

The Comanche dwelt south of the Wichita Mountains, along the Red River and its tributaries, often ranging west and southward into Mexico. They selected camp sites by flowing water (rivers), but on their war or hunting parties, often traveled "dry", knowing with that sense of the true nomad, the locations of waterholes and rock sinks fed by deep springs.

A true Plains Indian tribe, the Comanche's culture was much the same as that of the other Plains Indians. In war they used the bow and arrow, the stone-hammer and pipe-axe, the round buffalo shield. They rarely wore the jackets of buckskin that the northern tribes used, but contended themselves with hip-high leggings fronted and backed by buckskin flaps.

The Comanche used the tepee, the universal dwelling of the Plains Indian, and decorated it, as did the others, with ornate

## TIM HOLT

representations of his deeds in black and red and yellow pigments. By trading with the Navajo and Apache, the Comanche bought silver ornaments and belt buckles, and richly painted blankets. The Comanche stock-in-trade? Horses!

Although friendly to the Navajo and the Kiowas, the Comanche hated the Apaches with a fierce and deadly hatred. A young warrior would rather fight an Apache than eat buffalo steak. With the Kiowas, however, the Comanche had something of an unwritten alliance. They were friends, an unusual state of affairs between such warring tribes as the Comanche and Kiowa.

Four main branches dominated the Comanche family. There were the *quohada*, the *yapparika* (root eaters), the *noyika* (antelopes), and the *kotchatekas* (buffalo eaters). Tribal organization was loose, almost non-existent. The various bands of Comanches roamed from the Arkansas River south into Mexico much as they willed. There was no sun dance to bring them together; for some reason the *nimenim* never adopted this otherwise almost universal plains Indian custom.

The Comanche considered Quana Parker, son of a white girl (Cynthia Ann Parker), and Pahawka, a Comanche war chief, as their greatest warrior. It was Quana who led the attack on 'Dobe Walls in 1874, and who rode in President Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade in Washington, D. C. He did much good for his people after he had agreed to take up "the white man's way."

Essentially, the Comanche was a fighting man. Not for him the tilled gardens of the Wichitas and Caddoes. He grew no vegetables! He ate buffalo steaks, and stole fast horses, and shot a short, powerful bow. Since the early coming of the Spanish from Mexico, and the French from Louisiana, the Comanche fought the white man, as one more enemy to be added to the long list of Indian tribes.

Occasionally, the Comanche would trade with the whites, exchanging buffalo robes for horses, rifles and gunpowder. At a very early date, he was a power on the Plains. He fought the Spaniards and he fought the French, and since the Comanches stood at the top of the list when it came to cavalry (and what other form of army was effective on the vast plains?) he always won. As a matter of strict fact, no one ever truly conquered the Comanches. When Quana Parker brought them in to walk the road of peace with the white man, it was not a surrender. It was an agreement to stop fighting and to go live on a reservation; in other words, a peace treaty. But—not surrender!

In Taos, New Mexico, a great fair was held by the Spanish, every year. To Taos

came the Comanche tribes, in paint and blankets, heavy with buffalo hides and captives, and their herds of horses threw the dust skyward. With trading, the Comanche grew rich. It was an ideal life for an Indian—stealing horses, fighting to capture white men and sell them later to the other white men for ransom, hunting for buffalo and then trading the buffalo hides for rifles and gunpowder. And since the Comanche liked fighting so much, other tribes cast envious eyes at their riches, but left their bows hanging in their bow-cases, unstrung.

However, when the Americans moved westward, all this changed. Now the Comanche ran head-on into a tough breed of fighting men who were known as the *Texas Rangers*! The invention of the Colt revolver gave the Rangers a weapon that was to build its first reputation fighting these same Comanches in Texas. Soon the Rangers made the Comanche look with renewed respect on the white man as a fighter. It was the beginning of the end of the wild, free life for the *nimenim*.

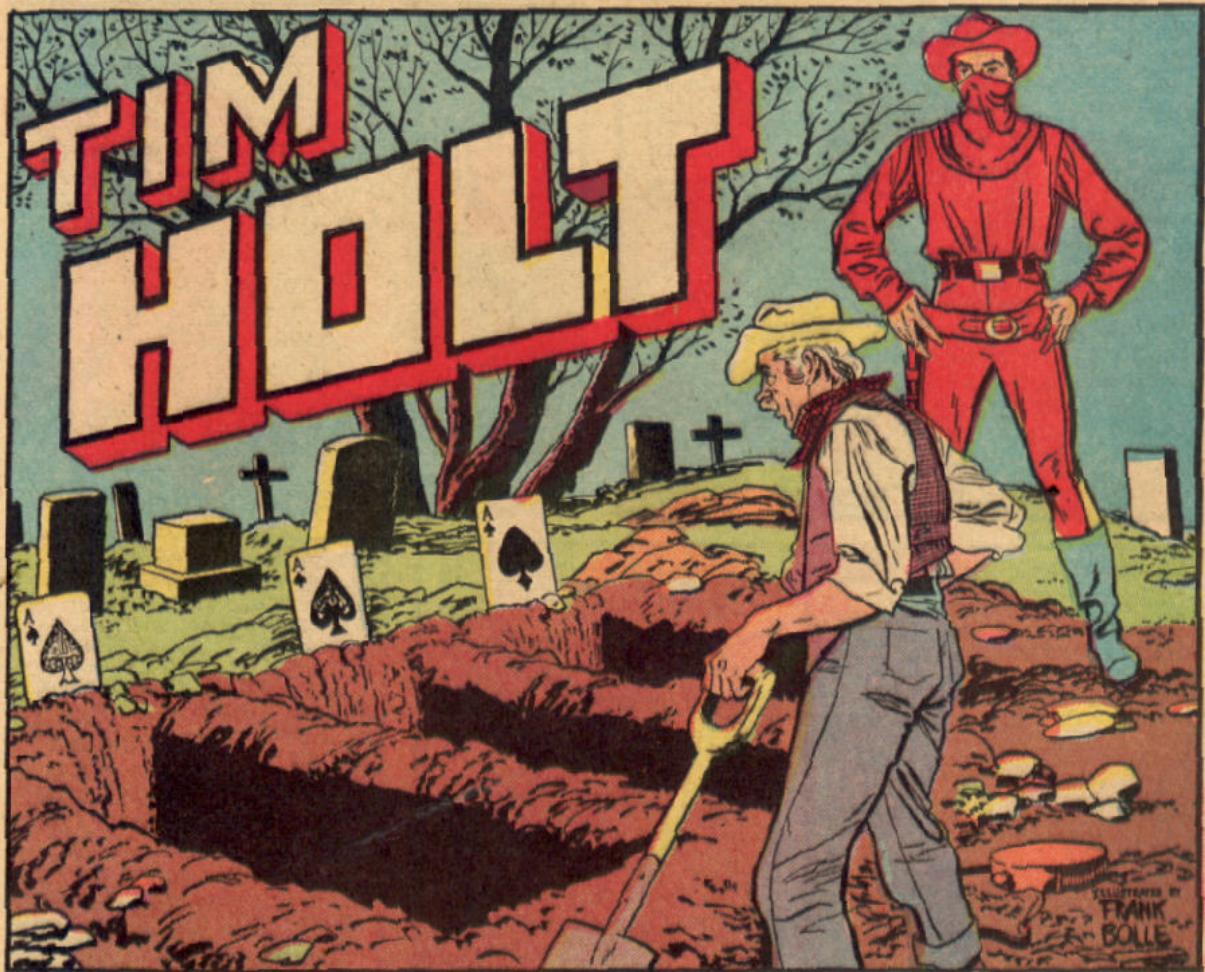
A great portion of the Comanches' strength in war rested, as has been said, on their astounding horsemanship. There was one riding feat that gave them a reputation for invincibility, however, that must be mentioned. Two riders would gallop their horses at full speed, racing down on a prone Indian (in actual warfare, the prone Indian is a dead Indian, or one badly wounded. At exactly the same moment, they would bend from the saddle of buffalo hide and each grasp an arm and a leg of the prone warrior. In such fashion they would carry him off, either to safety and recovery, or to burial. Naturally, their enemies, when scanning the battlefields, found few Comanches either dead or wounded. They began to suspect the Comanches of never getting hurt, which in turn resulted in their fearfully scanning the horizons continually for sight of a line of racing, whooping Comanches bent on fight and glory.

Sometimes their enemies turned to the white man for help, as the Apaches did, back in 1757. The Spanish gladly agreed to build a fort to protect their Apache friends. But their strategy backfired. The Comanches, stung to anger by this double-dealing on the part of the Apache, rode in force, and on a late winter night in 1758, smashed the Apaches and Spanish so thoroughly that they never forgot it. And so the Comanche continued as king of the plains—until the coming of the Americans.

Today, the Comanches live in Oklahoma on the Kiowa reservation. They number around 2000.

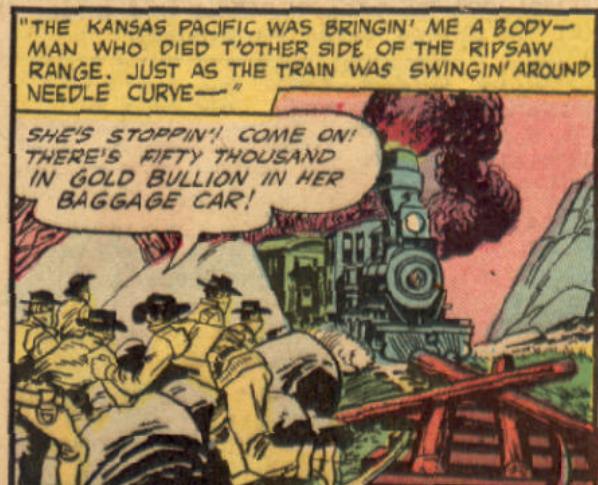
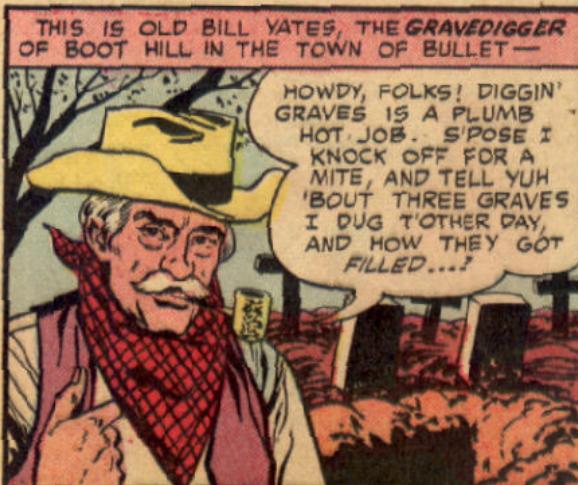
THE END

TIM HOLT



THE CARDS FORETOLD THE DEATHS OF THE THREE KENNEDY BROTHERS, ALL OF THEM BANDITS AND KILLERS — BUT REDMASK INTENDED TO CAPTURE, NOT KILL THEM! AS HE TOOK UP THEIR TRAIL, HOWEVER, HE FOUND HIMSELF FIGHTING FATE IN A GRIM ATTEMPT TO KEEP THE BADHATS OUT OF THE —

## "THREE GRAVES in BOOT HILL!"

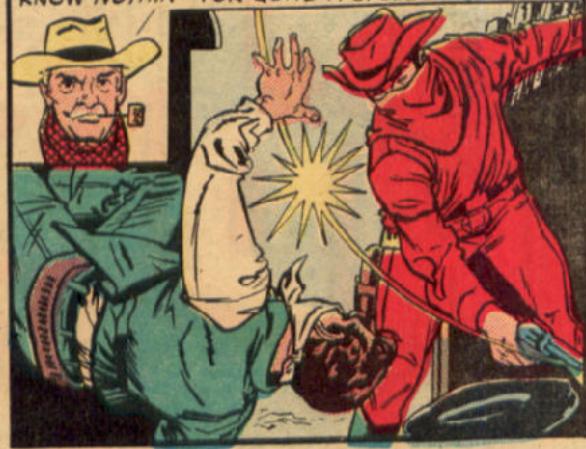


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"THEM BOYS WAS THE SIX KENNEDY BROTHERS-KILLERS ALL! ONE OF 'EM LEAPED UP FOR THE ENGINE CAB—"



"THAT HOMBRE DIDN'T KNOW REDMASK WAS RIDIN' WITH THE ENGINEER! MATTER OF FACT HE DIDN'T KNOW NOTHIN' FOR QUITE A SPELL!"



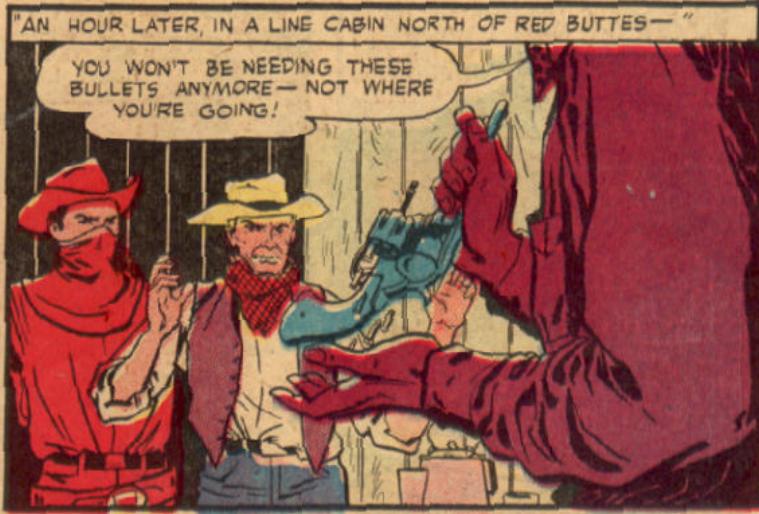
"THET WAS HOW I GOT MY CLIENT FOR THE GRAVE I'D DUG THAT AFTERNOON. THE TRAIN BROUGHT HIM TO ME ON TIME, THANKS TO REDMASK!"



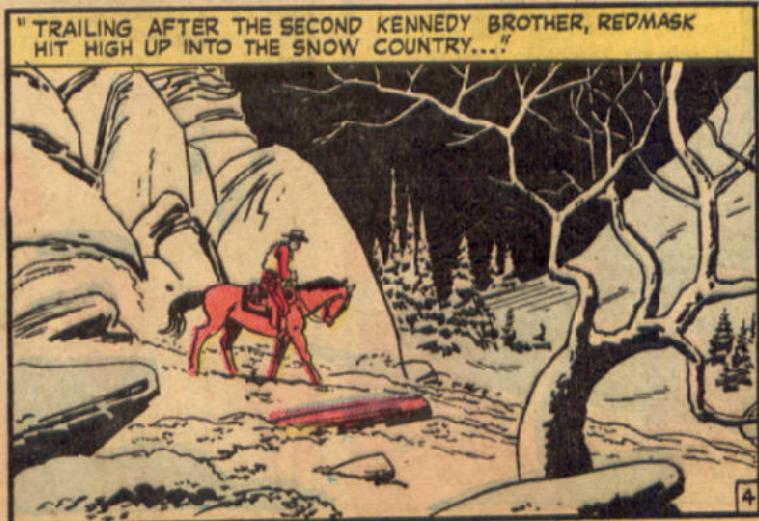
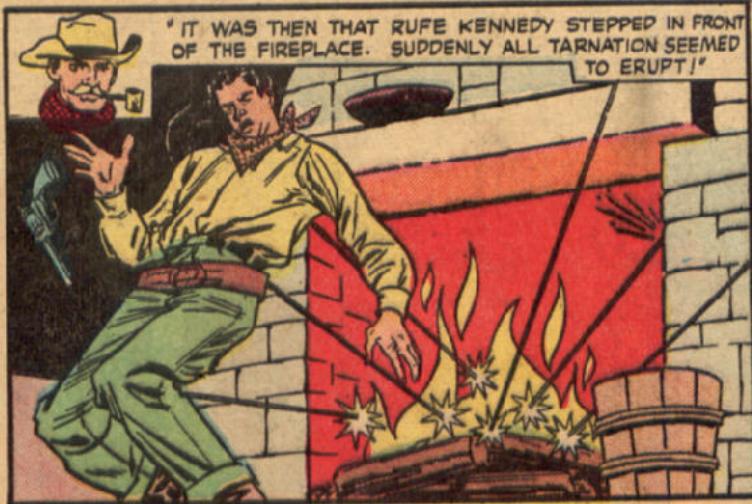
"YOU DUG THREE EXTRA GRAVES! THOSE KENNEDY BROTHERS I CAPTURED ARE ALIVE, AND IN JAIL!"



# TIM HOLT



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"HOURS LATER, REDMASK WALKED INTO A HUNTER'S CABIN. HE DID NOT SEE ED KENNEDY STANDING BY THE WOODPILE..."

REDMASK!

SHOOTIN'S TOO  
GOOD FOR YUH,  
REDMASK!  
I'M GOIN' TO  
SPLIT YOUR  
HEAD OPEN!



"REDMASK WHIRLED AROUND! HIS ARM CAME UP, JUST IN TIME!"

YOU ALMOST  
HAD ME  
THERE!

"ED KENNEDY WAS  
CRAZY-MAD! HIM  
AND REDMASK  
FOUGHT ALL OVER  
THE PLACE!"

IF I CAN'T CLEAVE YOUR  
HEAD, I'LL BEAT YOU TO  
DEATH WITH MY FISTS!

"AS REDMASK SLIPPED ON THE  
SNOW AND ICE, KENNEDY YANKED  
HIS GUN—"

LOOKS LIKE I'M  
GOING TO HAVE TO  
SHOOT YOU AFTER  
ALL!



"REDMASK HURLED HIMSELF  
FORWARD. HIS HAND CLOSED  
ON KENNEDY'S COLT, AND  
WRESTLED IT FROM HIS  
FINGERS —"



# TIM HOLT

"REDMASK HURLED THE GUN INTO THE AIR —"

THERE! YOU  
WON'T BE USING  
THAT ON ME!



"THE HEAVY SIXGUN  
HIT A LONG, SHARP  
ICICLE AND BROKE  
IT OFF —"



"THAT ICICLE WAS PLUMB HEAVY!  
IT WENT DOWN AND INTO ED  
KENNEDY'S NECK AS IF A STRONG  
MAN THRUST IT THERE!"

GGNNNGGG!



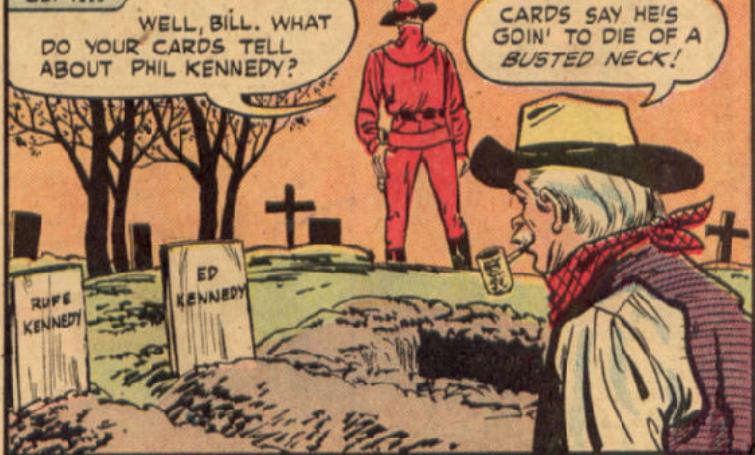
AN ICICLE! THE  
CARDS SAID A  
KNIFE WOULD KILL  
HIM, AND THAT  
ICICLE IS A  
KNIFE — AN ICE  
KNIFE!



"THE SECOND GRAVE WAS FILLED, NOW. ONLY PHIL KENNEDY WAS  
LEFT..."

WELL, BILL. WHAT  
DO YOUR CARDS TELL  
ABOUT PHIL KENNEDY?

CARDS SAY HE'S  
GOIN' TO DIE OF A  
BUSTED NECK!

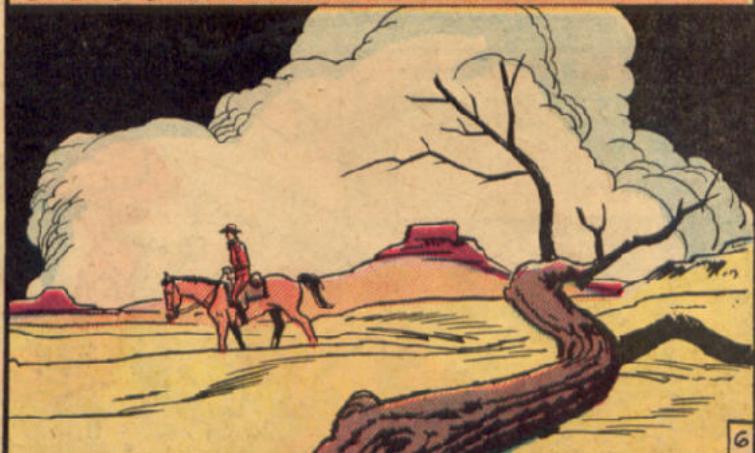


"REDMASK RODE OFF  
INTO THE DUSK. I  
LEANED ON MY SHOVEL,  
WATCHING HIM..."

YOU'LL SEE!  
REMEMBER — HE'S  
AGONNA DIE OF  
A BROKEN NECK!



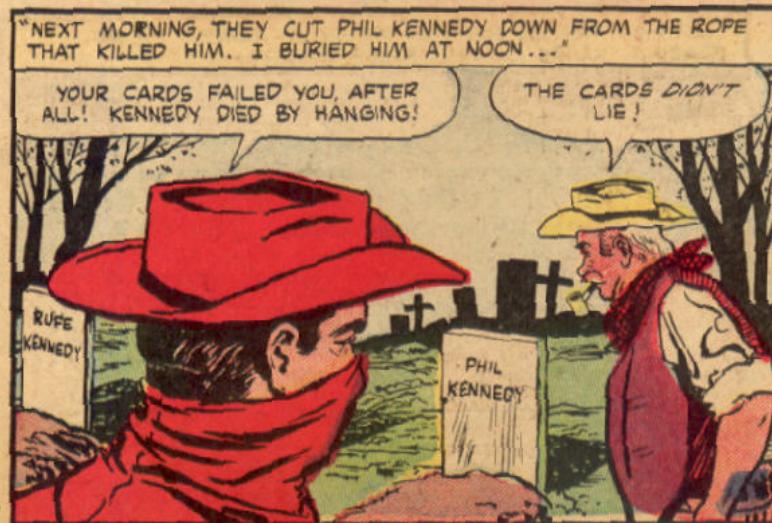
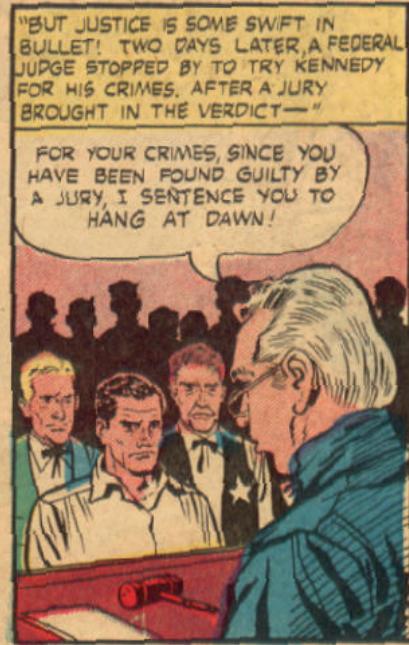
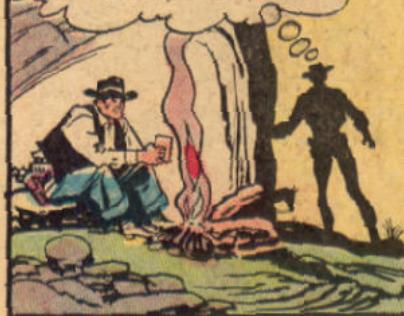
"REDMASK TRAILED HIS MAN PATIENTLY, ACROSS THE HOT  
BLAZING SANDS OF THE APACHE DESERT —"



# TIM HOLT

"ON THE MORNING OF THE FOURTH DAY OUT, REDMASK CAME UP ON THE FAR SIDE OF A LITTLE CAMPFIRE..."

I'M TAKING NO CHANCES OF KENNEDY DYING WITH A BROKEN NECK! I'M THROWING DOWN ON HIM, PRONTO—!"



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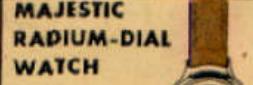
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